

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method of delivering a plurality of goods to a collection point, the
2 method comprising:
3 receiving a first order for a first item at an e tailer server, the e tailer server
4 accessed by a first web client via the Internet, the first web client operated by a first
5 customer, the first customer having a first residential address, wherein the first order is
6 received at a first time period during a first day;
7 receiving a second order for a second item at the e tailer server, the e tailer server
8 accessed by a second web client via the Internet, the second web client operated by a
9 second customer, the second customer having a second residential address, wherein the
10 second order is received at a second time period, such that the second time period
11 transpires on the first day;
12 determining an automated collection point for delivering the first and second item,
13 the automated collection point including a plurality of lockers, the automated collection
14 point having a third address, the third address distinct from the first address and the second
15 address;
16 scheduling a delivery time for delivering the first and second items to the
17 automated collection point, the delivery time transpiring on a second day, the second day
18 consecutive to the first day;
19 calculating a first fee and a second fee, the first fee applying to the first customer
20 for delivery of the first item and the second fee applying to the second customer for the
21 delivery of the second item, wherein the first fee and the second fee include a pro-rata
22 discount.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the automated collection point
2 further includes determining if one or more of the plurality of lockers can physically
3 accommodate the first item and second item.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein determining the automated collection point further includes determining if the one or more of the plurality of lockers are available for delivery on the second day.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein determining the automated collection point further includes selecting the automated collection point from a plurality of automated collection points.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the automated collection point is closer to the first and second residential addresses than a remainder of the plurality of automated collection points.

6. The method of claim 4, wherein the third address is within a pre-determined radius of the first and second addresses.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the pre-determined radius is 5 kilometers.

8. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
after opening the lock, sending a confirmation message from the microcontroller to the printer.

9. The method of claim 8, the first and second scheduling messages further including the third address.

10. The method of claim 9, the first and second scheduling messages further including the delivery time.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein the first and second scheduling messages comprise e-mail messages.

12. A method of delivering goods comprising:
receiving a plurality of orders via a plurality of web clients at an e-tailer web server, the e-tailer web server in communication with the web clients via the Internet, each of the plurality of orders coming from a distinct client from the plurality of web clients, and each of the plurality of web clients located at a distinct residence from a plurality of

residences and corresponding to a distinct customer from a plurality of customers, wherein the plurality of orders is received by the e-tailer web server on a first day;

determining a first subset of the plurality of orders, wherein the first subset are to be delivered to a first collection point on a second day, the second day consecutive to the first day, such that the first subset of orders correspond to a first subset of the plurality of users and the first subset of users correspond to a first subset of residences from the plurality of residences, wherein each residence from the first subset of residences are within a pre-fixed radius of the first collection point;

determining a second subset of the plurality of orders, wherein the second subset are to be delivered to a second collection point on the second day, the second subset of orders corresponding to a second subset of the plurality of users and the second subset of users correspond to a second subset of residences from the plurality of residences, wherein each residence from the second subset of residences are within a pre-fixed radius of the second collection point;

calculating a first fee for the first subset of orders, the first fee to be assessed to each of the first plurality of users;

calculating a second fee for the second subset of orders, the second fee to be assessed to each of the second plurality of users.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the first pre-fixed radius is equal to the second pre-fixed radius.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the first pre-fixed radius is 20 or fewer miles.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the first pre-fixed radius is 10 or fewer miles.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the first pre-fixed radius is 5 or fewer miles.

17. The method of claim 12, wherein the first fee and the second fee include pro-rata discounts.

1 18. The method of claim 12, wherein the first and second collection points
2 comprise include a first and second plurality of automated lockers, respectively.

1 19. The method of claim 18, wherein determining the first subset of the
2 plurality of orders includes for each order in the first subset of orders, reserving a locker
3 from the first plurality of lockers, wherein the locker is physically capable of
4 accommodating the order from the first subset of orders.

1 20. The method of claim 19, wherein determining the second subset of the
2 plurality of orders includes for each order in the second subset of orders, reserving a
3 locker from the second plurality of lockers, wherein the locker is physically capable of
4 accommodating the order from the second subset of orders.

1 21. A computer network architecture for scheduling delivery of goods ordered
2 from an e-tailer, the method comprising:
3 an e-tailer web server in communication with a plurality of customers via a
4 plurality of web browsers via the Internet, the e-tailer web server including
5 a plurality of records for the plurality of customers, each of the plurality of records
6 further including a distinct e-mail address and physical address for the customer,
7 a list of a plurality of automated collection points for receiving goods ordered from
8 the e-tailer,
9 a list of pending deliveries to the automated collection points;
10 a host server corresponding to a courier, the host server coupled to the web server
11 coupled via the Internet;
12 means for selecting an automated collection point from the plurality of collection
13 points to fulfill an order of goods;
14 means for calculating a delivery fee for a delivery from the list of pending
15 deliveries corresponding to the order of goods to the automated collection point;
16 means for communicating the order of goods from the e-tailer web server to the
17 courier host server.

1 22. The computer network system of claim 21, wherein the means for
2 calculating the delivery fee includes means for applying a consolidation discount amongst
3 the plurality of customers.

23. The computer network system of claim 22, wherein the means for calculating the delivery fee includes means for applying a pro rata discount for the plurality of customers.

24. The computer network system of claim 21, the computer network system further comprising a plurality of cookies resident on the plurality of web browsers, each of the plurality of cookies including a preferred collection point from the plurality of collection points.

25. The computer network system of claim 24, further comprising:
means for scheduling the delivery in the courier host server.

26. The computer network system of claim 25, further comprising:
means for confirming the delivery to the upon completion of the delivery to the automated collection point.

27. The computer network system of claim 21, further comprising:
means for determining if the automated collection point can accommodate the order of goods.

28. The computer network system of claim 27, wherein the automated collection point includes a plurality of automated lockers.

29. The computer network system of claim 28, wherein each of the automated lockers is controlled by a microcontroller from the plurality of microcontrollers.

30. The computer network system of claim 29, wherein the plurality of microcontrollers are in communication with the courier host server via the Internet.

31. The computer network system of claim 30, further comprising:
means for communicating a password for opening an automated locker from the plurality of automated lockers to a microcontroller operating the locker from the courier host server via the Internet.

32. The computer network system of claim 31, wherein the password identifies the courier.

- 1 33. The computer network system of claim 32, wherein the password is unique
- 2 to the order of goods.

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